

REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are pending. By this Amendment, the specification is amended to add the continuity data thereto, and claims 1-4, 9, 11-13, 18-34, 36, 37 and 44 are amended in order to improve their grammar. In addition, claims 2, 11, 19 and 24 have been amended in order to address the drawing objection made in the parent application (Application No. 10/223,607), and claim 37 has been amended to address the 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph rejection made in the parent application. No new matter is added by the above amendments.

Applicants note with appreciation the identification of allowable subject matter in claims 28, 29, 32 and 33 in the parent application.

In the parent application, the Patent Office objected to the drawings by asserting that the optical proximity correction recited in claims 2, 19 and 24 should be shown in the drawings. Applicants submit that the amendments of these claims overcomes this drawing objection. Moreover, the drawings show masks that have been subjected to optical proximity correction. Withdrawal of the drawing objection is requested.

The Office Action also rejected claims 2, 19, 21 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph by asserting that "optical proximity correction" was not enabled in the specification. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

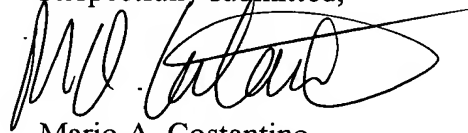
Optical proximity correction is well known in the art, and is described in the specification at, for example, page 14, line 14 - page 15, line 6. Also see page 17, line 19 - page 18, line 5 regarding adjustment based on OPC. Applicants submit that the above-noted description is sufficient to enable this aspect of the claims. Withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph rejection is requested.

Claims 37-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph on the grounds that "the predetermined plane" in claim 37 lacked antecedent basis. Applicants submit that the above amendment to claim 37 overcomes this rejection.

The Examiner is requested to consider the references identified in the Information Disclosure Statement filed herewith. These references are of record in the parent application.

Examination and allowance in due course are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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